



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
香港中文大學 音樂系

Colloquium Lecture

6 November 2015, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Rm LG01, Hui Yeung Shing Building, Chung Chi College,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

“Performed Listening: Aesthetic Experience, Musical Imagination, Propulsion, and Elasticity”

Professor Richard Kurth, University of British Columbia

Richard Kurth is Director and Professor of Music Theory at the School of Music, University of British Columbia. He earned the Ph.D. in Music Theory at Harvard University, under the supervision of David Lewin. Kurth’s research interests include theory and analysis of 19th- and 20th-century repertoires, connections between music and poetry in vocal music, and relations between performance and analysis. His numerous publications on diverse aspects of Arnold Schoenberg’s music have appeared as chapters in the *Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg* and in three other edited volumes, and as articles in *Music Theory Spectrum* and the *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center*. Additional articles on theoretical and analytical dimensions of twelve-tone music have appeared in the *Journal of Music Theory* and *Theory and Practice*, and essays on Schubert’s vocal and instrumental music have appeared in *19th-Century Music*. Kurth was co-recipient of the 1993 Society for Music Theory Young Scholar Award, and has served on the Review Board of *Music Theory Spectrum*.



ABSTRACT: Seeking to articulate and explore a larger framework for comparative analysis of musical performances, this lecture considers questions that lie between music theory and analysis, cognitive science, and philosophical perspectives, then moves towards a preliminary formulation of two concepts that might prove useful for comparing performance interpretations and communicating performance choices and effects. The presentation begins by sketching a perspective on sensory experience in music, and then compares three modes of aesthetic interest. On this basis it then focuses on a particular type of aesthetic intentionality and imaginative listening experienced by music professionals and intensive amateur listeners, the ability to experience actual and imaginary hearings concurrently in real time. This form of aesthetic experience in turn becomes the basis on which notions of (rhythmic, metric, temporal) “propulsion” and “elasticity” are introduced. Illustrative examples will be drawn from performances of Beethoven’s *Eroica* Symphony.